

HEMI-SYNC® Journal

Vol. XIV Spring 1996 No. 2

A Research and Educational
Publication of The Monroe Institute

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PEAK AND OTHER EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCES DURING THE GATEWAY VOYAGE



by Todd J. Masluk, MA, EdM

Todd J. Masluk is a PhD candidate (ABD) at the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology in Palo Alto, California. He holds MA and EdM degrees in counseling psychology from Columbia University. He has worked as an educational-vocational counselor at Columbia's Psychological Consultation Center and as a hospice counselor with cancer patients at Cabrini Medical Center in New York City. His chief research interests are in the areas of peak performance states and exceptional human abilities. Todd also has a strong interest in the possibilities of using Hemi-Sync technology for human factors engineering in business and industry. The varieties of exceptional experience encountered during TMI's *GATEWAY VOYAGE* residential program became the subject of his PhD dissertation. Preliminary findings were reported at the 1995 Professional Seminar.

Background

A revolution is occurring in consciousness expansion, the development of altered states, and psycho spiritual growth (Walsh and Vaughan 1993). At the forefront of this movement is an array of "neurotechnologies." These neurotechnologies are one of the newest hopes for promoting psychological growth. Many claims have been made regarding the efficacy of neurotechnological approaches to enhancing human performance and promoting exceptional positive well-being (Hutchison 1994). Their potential to induce peak or similar kinds of experience is also suggested by some researchers (Isaacs 1993; Wilson 1991).

Despite such claims, a computer-assisted search of the literature has revealed a dearth of empirical research on the nature and patterns of peak experiences associated with the use of these modalities. One program in which audioguidance is used is the *GATEWAY VOYAGE* conducted at The Monroe Institute (TMI). Anecdotal reports suggest that peak or similar experiences are a common occurrence during this program and participants' lives are often dramatically changed by these events. The unusual frequency and consistency with which such events reportedly occur constitute a phenomenon worthy of investigation. However, to date there have been no systematic attempts to confirm these claims by empirical means.

Introduction to the Study

A dissertation study was conducted to (1) examine the qualitative nature of reported peak and peak-like experiences during the *GATEWAY* program as recounted by participants, and (2) study selected characteristics that may differentiate participants who have these experiences from those who do not.

Description of Participants

Participants consisted of volunteers from TMI's *GATEWAY VOYAGE*. Out of eleven groups, 160 people (81 males, 79 females) participated. They ranged in age from 24 to 72, with a median age of 46.5.

Measurement Instruments

A two-part Peak Experience Questionnaire (PEQ) was developed for this study. Part 1 was used to collect retrospective self-reports of participants' recent peak and other personally significant experiences. Part 2 was designed to explore the impact of these experiences on participants' lives, as well as the cognitive processes involved in integrating them.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) was used to assess the personality types of participants in the program.

The Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument (HBDI), a self-report, paper-and-pencil inventory, was used to assess participants' thinking or cognitive styles. The inventory is based on a metaphorical model of the brain that is quadripartite: left and right cerebral, and left and right limbic. The HBDI indicates one's degree of preference for each of the four thinking styles associated with these four "areas" of the brain.

Procedures

Pre-GATEWAY

The HBDI and MBTI were administered to volunteers by GATEWAY Trainers on the first day of each program. Demographic data were also collected to further define the research population.

Post-GATEWAY

Part 1 of the PEQ was mailed to participants one week after GATEWAY. Part 2 of the PEQ was mailed six months after GATEWAY. Accompanying the PEQ was a transcript of each participant's most significant experience(s) to aid in accurate recall. Reminder notices were sent one week after the initial mailings. If there was no response after three weeks, the mailings were repeated.

Preliminary Results

Out of 160 participants, 125 completed the study. Incomplete but useful data were collected from 35 participants who dropped out.

The MBTI was completed by 157 participants. The most frequently occurring type (40 participants) was "INFP" (Introverted Intuitive Feeling Perceiving). People with "INFP" preferences are characterized by inner warmth, tolerance and flexibility, and strong personal loyalties and convictions. They seek work that contributes to "something that matters," such as human understanding, happiness, or health. Their natural curiosity about new ideas frequently endows them with insight and long range vision.

The HBDI was completed by 156 participants. The most frequently occurring type (47 participants) was "2211." Primary characteristics of this type are the ability to be creative, holistic, and synthesizing in the right cerebral quadrant, and interpersonal, emotional, and spiritual in the right limbic quadrant. Secondary characteristics include logical, analytical, and mathematical thinking associated with the left cerebral quadrant, and organization, planning, and structure with the left limbic quadrant. In common parlance, these people are more "right brained" than "left brained."

One hundred twenty-one participants reported peak and other powerful or significant experiences on the PEQ (for a combined total of 291). Of these 121 participants, 23 were single experiences (i.e., reported only one experience) and 98 were multiple experiences (two or more). Twenty participants did not report any experiences. Nineteen participants did not return the PEQ. Only two negative or "nadir" experiences were reported. The fact that only two nadir experiences were reported—out of a large pool of positive experiences—suggests that the GATEWAY program is overwhelmingly perceived as positive and growth-producing.

In addition to peak experiences, a large variety of other "exceptional human experiences" were reported for which a provisional classification was developed. In Table 1, experiences are grouped by phenomenological content under four major categories: "Intensified Sensory and Perceptual Experiences (Body)," "Cognitive Experiences (Mind)," "Psychodynamic Experiences (Emotions)," and "Transpersonal Experiences (Spirit)." A fifth category, "Miscellaneous Experiences," was added to accommodate those that did not logically fit any of the other four categories. More experiences were reported under the category of "Trans-

personal Experiences" than all other major categories combined. The subcategory containing the greatest number of reported experiences is "Other Experiences of Consciousness outside the Usual Experiential Realms of Time and Space." However, it is closely followed by "Peak and Peak-Like Experiences" and "Inner Guidance or 'Channeling' Experiences" in descending order of frequency.

Data were also collected on the conditions under which experiences began. Insight was sought into what may possibly trigger or facilitate such events. Participants' peak and most powerful or significant experiences occurred most frequently (72 percent of the time) while listening to Hemi-Sync tapes. This finding suggests that the majority of personally meaningful experiences had during the GATEWAY program are directly associated with the use of the Hemi-Sync technology.

A variety of consistent aftereffects were reported: a greater commitment to one's psycho spiritual growth; a sense of being more self-determined and responsible for one's life; a greater self-acceptance; living more fully in the present; a greater love for humanity; an increased willingness to take risks; an increased desire to help others; feeling more inner-directed (less willing to please others at the expense of self); an increased spontaneity; and introspective tendencies (an inclination to use inner guidance in decision-making). The overall effects pointed in the direction of increased self-actualization.

In addition, for many the effects also implied a newly acquired sense of self-transcendence or realization that one is, indeed, "more than one's physical body." This new, expanded sense of self included belief in the existence of other levels of reality; feeling inherently connected to something larger than self; belief in some form of benevolent "higher power"; and the loss of fear of death (*knowing* there is life after death).

The data suggest that some kind of active cognitive engagement is necessary to integrate one's experiences. Some methods of engagement were preferred. Discussing the experience with others was the method most frequently cited. Many participants mentioned confining discussion to trustworthy, significant others, or to those who had undergone similar experiences. The next most frequently cited method was to read about similar experiences. This was followed—in order of frequency—by keeping the experience to oneself (many found the occurrence too sacred to share), and writing about it. These four processes were the predominant modes of synthesis. Other approaches included pondering the experience, painting or drawing the experience, expressing it musically, reliving or replaying the experience in one's mind, meditating on the experience, trying to recreate it, and listening for inner guidance.

Summary and Conclusion

Based on data collected from eleven groups, it appears that peak experiences occur with regularity during the GATEWAY program, as well as a wide range and multidimensionality of other trans-ordinary experiences. This great variety and depth of experiences suggest that GATEWAY helps to facilitate a huge opening or expansion of consciousness. This expansion seems to occur in both the outer and inner dimensions of being. Interestingly, the types, intensity, and richness of patterns of experience reported bear a striking resemblance to those reported by psychedelic (LSD) researchers (Grof 1976; Masters and Houston 1966; Pahnke and Richards 1972, 409-39). A useful metaphor to conceptualize the types of experience reported is that of "turning up the volume on life." One becomes more physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually awake.

To the extent that individuals are willing to acknowledge and consciously integrate such profound experiences, their lives may radically change in positive, growth-producing directions.

Table 1

Major Categories and Frequencies of Reported Experiences

I. Intensified Sensory and Perceptual Experiences (Body)

A. Deautomatization Experiences (11)

B. Somatic Awareness (18)

II. Cognitive Experiences (Mind)

A. Enhanced Mental Abilities (17)

- III. Psychodynamic Experiences (Emotions)
 - A. Regression to Early Childhood (and other life periods) (2)
 - B. Resolution of Emotional Conflicts and Personality Integration (16)
- IV. Transpersonal Experiences (Spirit)
 - A. Extreme Psychological Well-Being Experiences (23)
 - B. Peak and Peak-Like Experiences (43)
 - C. Psychical Experiences (21)
 - D. Inner Guidance or "Channeling" Experiences (42)
 - E. Imagery of the Personal and Transpersonal Unconscious (19)
 - F. Encounter Experiences (25)
 - G. Other Experiences of Consciousness outside the Usual Experiential Realms of Time and Space (46)
- V. Miscellaneous Experiences
 - A. Infrequent and Idiosyncratic Experiences (5)
 - B. Uncodable Experiences (3)

Note: Frequencies for types of experience are in parentheses after subcategory names.

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HEMI-SYNC'S IMPACT ON REMOTE VIEWING

by Joseph W. McMoneagle



Joseph W. McMoneagle retired from the United States Army in 1984, after serving as a special projects officer for the 902nd Military Intelligence Group. He currently owns Intuitive Intelligence Applications, which has provided eleven years of research expertise and resources to the Cognitive Sciences Laboratories of SRI-International and Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC). His specific area of interest is remote viewing (RV)—its research and development, as well as its applications. The book *Mind Trek*, Joe's story of how he became aware of and refined his RV skills, was published in 1993. He is currently working to finish his second book, *An Odyssey Through Time—Year 2999*.

Joe regularly speaks to participants at The Monroe Institute's GATEWAY VOYAGE programs. As a featured presenter at the 1995 Professional Seminar, he reviewed his work for the past eighteen years. Differences between remote viewing targets done before and after his introduction to Hemi-Sync were emphasized. He also outlined his theory of Hemi-Sync's value in the arena of paranormal functioning and as a major supportive tool for general creativity.

General knowledge of remote viewing (RV) has been affected a great deal by the recent and sudden publicity surrounding its use as an intelligence collection tool—considered by some as undesirable. This use is discussed in a formal report to Congress by the American Institutes for Research on behalf of the Central Intelligence Agency, entitled *An Evaluation of Remote Viewing: Research and Applications*, September 29, 1995. This report also addressed the quality of basic research and foreign assessment—both considered to be good. And yes, I have been involved in this program for nearly eighteen years.

One of the more immediate problems exposed by this publicity is a severe lack of knowledge about what RV is and isn't, as well as the differences between RV in the formal sense and what is generally considered to be psychic functioning. Let's begin with a description of those differences.

Remote viewing is the act of describing or drawing details about a place, person or thing without having any prior knowledge of that place, person, or thing. It is being psychic under specifically designed controls. These controls are exacting protocols developed by scientists, initially at SRI-International and then at the Cognitive Sciences Laboratory of SAIC. The controls are necessary to prevent fraud, to permit replication by other laboratories, and to establish a means of accurately evaluating results. It is important to understand that most of these protocols have been reviewed and approved by governmental scientific oversight committees prior to being employed. They have been restructured and reevaluated over time to ensure that they are stringent enough for most laboratories. Of course, some will never accept them.

Nearly twenty-four years of research have gone into protocol development and use. Replication has been achieved at many labs and universities, bringing a certain degree of legitimacy to the study of paranormal or psychic functioning. As a result, many psychics have adopted the label "remote viewing" to validate their own efforts while showing little understanding of the rules or protocols. This has led to a plethora of articles and writing portraying RV inaccurately. Some examples of this inaccuracy are: RV can be taught; anyone can become a good to exceptional remote viewer; RV's accuracy rate is 95 percent or better; anything can be targeted with remote viewing. My participation in the scientific application of remote viewing for the last eleven years indicates that these statements are false.

RV is probably a talent, just like athletics or music. Just as there are people who will never excel beyond Sunday jogging or playing an instrument in the basement for fun, there are those who will never excel beyond a reasonable description of target gestalt once in a while. RV can be clarified with a learning structure. The talent, while fixed, can probably be improved with regard to consistency. Like athletic or musical performance, it will never be perfect, nor work every time.

This brings us to accuracy. Accuracy is always assessed from more than one direction. In RV for scientific or research purposes, all that you have said about a target is compared to what is right about what you said. That is then compared to everything you could possibly have said. This produces a general figure of merit or quality for your RV. When you consider all that can be described about a target, you will never get it all—never mind completely correct. From the scientific viewpoint then, this becomes a relatively easy comparison.

Looking at RV for collection purposes moves it into an entirely different realm. You could essentially say almost nothing pertinent about the target. However, if you say one thing that wasn't previously known, and it is a piece of the overall puzzle that completes a picture, then its

value is immeasurable. You have the paradox of great value with little accuracy. This is the very essence of why RV-developed information isn't, and shouldn't be, used as stand-alone material. In an industrial or criminal investigative scenario, or in any other mode of *application*, RV is unlikely to ever exceed the accuracy expected in research. Statistically, the very best world-class remote viewers under laboratory conditions tend to run 50/50 as to whether they are on or off target. Anywhere from 60 to 85 percent accuracy is expected. In eighteen years I have yet to meet a remote viewer who knows when he/she is on target (with a couple of exceptions based on specifics of targets).

Some targets are almost impossible to get using RV. Missing persons, words, phrases, and numbers top the list. Words, phrases, and numbers will occur infrequently and usually spontaneously. Overall ideas or concepts are generally easier. With regard to targeting missing persons, unfortunately the deceased are easier than the living. The deceased don't move around a lot. Alive or dead, a target person's location descriptions can be developed. Then the problem becomes matching those locations to a known location. In a description which is 70 percent accurate, 30 percent of the material won't be reliable. Therefore, error is introduced. If there aren't significant descriptors in the drawings or transcripts, matching a known location is nearly impossible. Rarely the case, a description could be of immense value—if a missing child happens to be standing in the middle of Disney World, for instance.

Previous to 1983, I was dealing with these problems and looking for a method to improve my quality and accuracy. As a result, my office proposed working with Robert Monroe in the lab at The Monroe Institute for one year. During this time Bob agreed to develop a special Hemi-Sync tape for improving my RV abilities. He felt it might also be possible to harness my out-of-body (OOB) abilities, which, at the time, were mostly spontaneous events. My RV statistical averages were well established by then, in both the research and applications areas.

Up to that point, my primary targeting methods had been (1) short-range outbinder targets, (2) long-range outbinder targets, (3) targeted photos of individuals, (4) coordinate targets, (5) photographs of target exteriors requiring interior descriptions, (6) National Geographic targets, (7) photographs in sealed envelopes, and (8) questions in sealed envelopes. Performance was good but inconsistent. It was difficult to paint a whole picture of the target. The picture came through in fractured or component sections, with incomplete descriptions of the relationship between the parts.

Specific problems relating to the target mechanisms involved information picked up going and coming from an outbinder target, included differences of perspective (viewpoints), 180-degree reversals of view, bleed-through from one target to the next (timing), mixed intent (what to do with the target), being overwhelmed with the target's complexity, and ability to focus on the central problem or most important specifics of the target first. In addition, I had some limiting beliefs regarding RV. Sometimes focusing was a challenge, which directly affected my internal processing methods used in digesting the raw information generated during RV.

During the course of a year, I learned a lot through the use of Hemi-Sync. In reference to beliefs, I learned a remote viewer must not be wedded to a single idea of reality or how it must work; to a single concept of religion, philosophy, or a social program; nor to fixed linear or perpendicular cause-and-effect attitudes. I became open and agreeable to sudden change, with the attending responsibilities—whatever they might be. The value of straying from logic, developing and expanding my holistic thinking methodologies, and extinguishing or unlearning invalid approaches to thought became apparent.

The TMI tools enabled me to focus fully by developing an ability to quickly quiet the mind and reduce mental noise. I learned to explore, identify, map, and control my inner world and to understand the borders of consciousness—my subconscious with its individualized language and the other altered states we accessed. More than one meditation technique was added to my repertoire, and I mastered

replicable and measurable brain states. In that very short year, I also came to understand the pitfalls of repetitive learning techniques. They frequently omit necessary requirements, and results are also limited by the teacher's skill. Many metaphysical or esoteric training facilities teach specific beliefs. These can be counterproductive philosophically and even reinforce older, inappropriate, processing methods. In association with charismatic teachers, gurus, or mentors, implied shielding mechanisms can be instilled that set a high-end limit to learning itself. Robert Monroe and TMI provided the Hemi-Sync tools free of such attachments. These tools are still in use by me today. They have expanded my personal understanding of reality in reference to time, space, and content. They have reinforced my personal philosophy and spiritual beliefs. Most outstandingly, linear concepts have been replaced by holistic understanding—initiating change in my basic self.

Specific applications/areas that have been affected are: better inner focus and centering; control of altered states (mind awake/body asleep); control of lucid dreaming, alpha states, and out-of-body states; reduced inner noise; opening of holistic insight; and the extinguishing of erroneous cognitive patterns. Did my RV improve? Ultimately, the answer is, "Yes." My statistics didn't change. But the quality, cognition, and overall comprehension of targets improved a great deal, along with my understanding of the process.

A final word. If you are looking for instruction on what to think or what to do, The Monroe Institute is not for you. The specific axioms upon which it is founded remain the same. They are simply and elegantly stated as follows:

- You are more than your physical body.
- Hemi-Sync is only a tool.
- Religion, theology, faith, creed, belief, concept, philosophy, doctrine, outlook, tenet, theory, or viewpoint is completely up to the individual.



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The HEMI-SYNC JOURNAL is published four times annually by The Monroe Institute, Route 1, Box 175, Faber, VA 22938-0749. Telephone: 804-361-1252. Membership/subscription rates from \$50 to \$150 per year.

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